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FM AMEMBASSY BUENOS AIRES
TO RUEHC/SECSTATE WASHDC 4130
INFO RUCNMER/MERCOSUR COLLECTIVE
RUEHLO/AMEMBASSY LONDON 1340
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RUCNDT/USMISSION USUN NEW YORK 0306

UNCLAS BUENOS AIRES 000868

SIPDIS
SENSITIVE

DEPT FOR OES/OA EVAN BLOOM

E.O. 12958: N/A

TAGS: [PREL](#) [PTBS](#) [PHSA](#) [AR](#)

SUBJECT: ARGENTINA SUGGESTS SOLUTION TO CONTROVERSY OVER ITS CLAIM
TO ANTARTIC CONTINENTAL SHELF

REF: A) BUENOS AIRES 0474; B) BUENOS AIRES 0641

¶1. (SBU) ADCM and ESTCouns met on July 22 at the Argentine MFA with Rafael Grossi, Director General for Political Coordination and a close advisor to Foreign Minister (FM) Jorge Taiana, regarding the issue of Argentina's submission of its claim to the Antarctic continental platform. Grossi reiterated that the GoA considered its presentation to the UN Commission on the Limits of the Continental Shelf (CLCS) on April 21 to have been "within the spirit and parameters of the 7 plus 2 agreement," while admitting that the text did not follow the agreement "word for word." He noted that the GoA had explained to the USG and to the other 7 plus 2 members the reasons behind the wording of its submission (ref A), and stressed that Argentina never had any intention to question the Antarctic Treaty or the 7 plus 2 Agreement. "The agreement was a long and complex negotiation," he said, adding "Argentina attaches great importance to cooperation in the Antarctic and wants to preserve an atmosphere of collegiality."

¶2. (SBU) Grossi acknowledged that the GoA had taken note of the concerns that the United States and other 7 plus 2 members had expressed and wanted to "explore ways to reach a compromise." He suggested a proposal, whereby the GoA would take advantage of the August 24 meeting of the CLCS on Argentina's claim to state to the Commission that "Argentina understands that the rules of the CLCS specifically stipulate that certain areas are excluded from consideration. Our submission is not for consideration."

¶3. (SBU) ESTCouns requested further clarification regarding the exact language the GoA would use and inquired if the GoA would consider using the exact same language in its August 24 oral statement to the Commission that it should have used in its written submission in April (i.e. specifically requesting that the Commission not take any action for the time being with regard to the information in the submission that relates to the Antarctic continental shelf.) Grossi replied that the wording of the GoA's statement could certainly be worked on, but he asked for our understanding that the GoA was "walking a fine line." What the GoA did not want, he stressed, was to re-issue its original note or issue a written correction to the original note. He noted that an oral statement made at the CLCS' August 24 hearing would become part of the written public record of the meeting.

¶4. (SBU) ADCM told Grossi that post would transmit Argentina's proposal back to Washington. Grossi stressed that he was available at any time for further discussion of the proposal or of the language to be used.

¶5. (SBU) Comment: Relentless pressure, not only from the United States but also from other members of the 7 plus 2 group, has definitely had some effect on the Argentines. The GoA appears to have understood that its original explanation will not do and is

clearly trying to find a way to resolve the situation without losing face. From post's point of view, the bottom line is that there appears to have been some progress in that the GoA now appears more willing to communicate directly to the CLCS; most probably with the exact language we wanted them to use; and orally, but with the understanding that their oral statement can become part of the written record of the August 24 session of the CLCS. Given the political sensitivity of this issue in Argentina (ref B), we believe it unlikely that the GoA would be willing to go much further than the solution it proposes. End Comment.

FEATHERSTONE